

Mum's anguish at ramp theft

Thieves steal ramp that allows stricken Robert's wheelchair access family home

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THE mother of a young dad who remains in a coma after being shot in the face in 2008, has appealed for the return of a wheelchair ramp – which was stolen from outside the family home on Tuesday.

Dad of two Robert Delany was 28-years-old when he was shot in the face while looking out of his apartment window in Russell Rise, Tallaght on October 24, 2008 – in response to an intercom call at 6.30am.

Since then the young postman has been in a vegetative state and is being cared for at Peamount Hospital in Newcastle.

However, his mother Noeleen takes her son home to the family's house in Castlelawns, Tallaght, four times a week – during which she cares for him and plays his favourite music.

In order for the family to bring Robert in and out of the house, a ramp is required – and yesterday morning, when Noeleen arrived home with her son, the ramp had been stolen from the front garden.

She told *The Echo*: "I was totally shocked, I couldn't stop crying – it's terrible to think that something could be so cruel.

"Christmas is a very sad time for us and the past two weeks have been very tough, so for this to happen doesn't help."

She added: "Thankfully the taxi man who brought us home on Tuesday was able to help lift

Robert into the house but we need that ramp – moving Robert in and out of the house is too dangerous without it.



SHOT IN FACE: Robert Delany remains in a coma

"Our plan is to bring Robert home as much as I can and I know what kind of people steal a ramp for a wheelchair, the hurt caused to the family outweighs any money from its sale."

The HSE provided the Delany family with the original ramp but funding is not available for a second, according to Noeleen.

Noeleen said: "I want Robert home as much as I can and I would ask whoever took it to leave it back in the garden.

"I would also ask the community to keep their eyes peeled if they hear of people selling a wheelchair ramp."

She added: "I really don't

know what kind of people steal a ramp for a wheelchair, the hurt caused to the family outweighs any money from its sale."

The flat ramp is around six foot long and two-and-a-half feet wide.

It is cream on both sides with a black runner in the middle and has two handles for lifting.

Robert's parents, Terry and Noeleen, and his partner, Mags Purthill, have been fighting for justice for Robert since the horrific attack.

Visit www.innocentvictims.org/violence.ie for more.